

**Minutes**  
**King County Rural Forest Commission**  
**August 13, 2003**  
**Preston Community Center**

*Commissioners present:* Gordon Bradley, Dennis Dart, Lee Kahn, Fred McCarty, Doug Schindler, Dave Warren

*Commissioners absent:* Jean Bouffard, Rudy Edwards, Bill Kombol, Matt Mattson , Doug McClelland

*Exofficio members:* Randy Sandin

*Staff:* Perry Falcone, Sandy Kilroy, Randy Sandin, Benj Wadsworth

*Guests:* Donna Brathovde, Thom Randolph, Julie Keough, Steve Ketz

Benj Wadsworth called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

**Minutes Approval**

Motion 1-803 “To adopt the April, May and June 2003 minutes as written.” Steve Ketz clarified that in the June minutes there is a reference to the study that Lori Grant completed about the Forest Production District as part of the standstill agreement between King County, Weyerhaeuser and Plum Creek. The study was supposed to be a collaborative study involving the three parties that signed the agreement. It was a well written piece of research, but it was not a collaborative effort.

April, May and June minutes moved, seconded and approved with clarification to June minutes.

**Staff Report**

Benj commented that Council member Phillips requested that staff “review the forest policies and study recent trends to determine if additional measures are needed to ensure continued commercial forest production in the Forest Production District.” Benj has been compiling data about permit applications, lot segregations and ownership change. At this point there is no formal recommendation, but staff will keep the RFC up-to-date.

Ted Sullivan has been looking into changes to the Timberland CUT program to address the issue of proportionality in terms of how lots are assessed. The Assessors office is mandated by state Ordinance # 11195 which states that “the public benefit value for those portions of parcels accepted into the open space program where no further subdivision is permitted due to minimum lot size requirements shall be equal to the same percentage of overall assessed value as the portion represents of the total parcel size further reduced by the current use assessed valuation schedule.” In summary, the law states that the assessment needs to be calculated in the current system. Any change would have to take place at the state level. Benj will invite staff from the Assessors office to the next meeting for further discussion.

Forestry staff has issued a request for proposals to several forestry consultants to work on County-owned forestland on an as-needed basis. The immediate need is for a timber inventory on a proposed 65-acre harvest on Taylor Mountain. Bill Loeber is handling the RFP.

Staff was awarded Conservation Futures money toward the acquisition of development rights on the Cedar Falls Tree Farm near North Bend and the Striker Forest in the Rock Creek Valley. These will require a 50% match, so staff will need to raise more funds for both projects. It is good to see that the Citizen Oversight Committee understands the value of conserving working forestland in the County.

Staff presented to the Council NRPOS Committee on June 19 to provide an update on the activities of the Forestry Program and to confirm Doug Schindler and Lee Kahn to the Commission.

Staff presented the Programmatic Plan for the Management of County-owned Forestland to both the watershed stewards and WLRD management. It has undergone minor changes but should be finalized in the very near future.

The field trip to Vashon has been postponed because the Vashon Forest Stewards have run into some problems hiring a logger. They only received two bids, both of which were deemed too high. They are hoping to do the harvest this winter. Staff will work with the Stewards to conduct a field trip when the harvest does happen.

Benj has continued to pursue the local wood marketing concept. He has met with a variety of interested parties including Eric Fritch, owner of Fritch Mill in Snohomish; Barry Sims and Kent Goodyear from Ecotrust in Portland that are working on connecting the producers of certified wood with the consumers of it; Tim Taylor and Matt Freeman-Gleason from Environmental Home Center and Brian Cloward at Mithun Architects. There seems to be a lot of interest in having a larger meeting to brainstorm ideas sometime this fall. However, due to recent staffing

changes in the Forestry Program, Benj does not know if there will be time to pursue this effort. Dave Warren suggested that he might be able to put some time into this effort.

The lead position of the Forestry Program has been cut from the Executive's proposed budget. At this point, Benj will continue to coordinate the program, Kristi will manage the technical assistance and education programs, Bill will manage the Forestry Program's involvement in the County-owned forestland, and Linda will continue to run the urban forestry program. Due to this reduction, staff will no longer be focusing specifically on outreach to the general public and the Forest Outreach Network. Much of this work, including the development of the slideshow, website and brochure is complete. Staff will continue to do the occasional slideshow and educate around other efforts such as the harvest on Taylor Mountain.

Benj suggested that the RFC move to six meetings a year. He does not want the RFC to lose it's motivation and effectiveness, but the staff time needs to be cut back. One possibility is to hold six meetings but lengthen them to 3 or 4 hours. Hopefully this will also improve attendance given the lighter commitment. Benj also commented that it is time to appoint new officers, in part due to some turnover on the RFC. Steve Ketz has resigned his seat due to his changing responsibilities at Weyerhaeuser, and Ken Koenigsmark has stepped down due to his new position at Boeing. Benj is in contact with Hancock Timber, and Julie Stangell has agreed to submit an application representing large forest landowners. Doug Schindler has taken Ken's place as a representative of non-timber values of forest.

All agreed to move to six meetings a year. Fred suggested that it would be a good idea for Doug to stay on as chair to maintain some continuity during this time of changeover. All agreed that this would be a good idea.

### **WRIA 7 Salmon Conservation Plan**

Sandy Kilroy gave a slide presentation about the WRIA 7 conservation plan. She is hoping for feedback about how to involve forest landowners and what issues are important to the forestry community. There is a projected 53% population increase in the basin and in the population served by the basin's water supply. The WRIA 7 planners are focusing primarily on land use issues. These issues include loss of channel area and complexity, lack of large woody debris, flooding, increased sedimentation, loss of wetlands, stream barriers, and poor quality of riparian forests. Sandy presented a map showing high, moderate and low value salmon habitat. They are hoping to complete a draft of the Plan by June 2004.

With regard to forestry, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the land base in WRIA 7 is forested, so forestry interests are very important. Sandy posed several questions:

- What are the perspectives and concerns of the forestry community toward the salmon conservation effort?
- How should WRIA 7 planners involve the forestry community?
- What tools should staff be exploring as part of the planning process?

There is currently nobody on the Snoqualmie Forum representing forestry. Julie Keough suggested that the Forest and Fish Law covers much of what the salmon conservation plan hopes to address in terms of forest practices. She suggested that it would be smart for planners to be involved with the Cooperative Monitoring and Evaluation Research (CMER) process to help assess whether the current law is effectively conserving salmon. Steve Ketz commented that staff should focus on areas that they can effect. They cannot effect the Forest and Fish Law, which has already been endorsed by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Dave Warren suggested that staff needs to work with the Cascade Land Conservancy to ensure that working forestland is not converted to development. Benj commented that the issue of conversion was raised at the Shared Strategy Conference. He feels that too often there is casual agreement that working forests are part of the solution, but at the same time, many people working on salmon recovery are also pushing for increased forest practice regulations. Staff needs to be aware that increased regulations may have the adverse effect of driving landowners to convert their land to other uses. Benj commented that the state is struggling with how to assist small forest landowners with their Road Maintenance and Abandonment Plans. He feels that the WRIA could be very helpful in assisting with culvert removal and road abandonment on these properties.

### **Friends of Rock Creek Valley Conservation Plan**

Thom Randolph gave a presentation about the Rock Creek Valley Conservation Plan. The Plan is available on their web-site at [www.frcv.org](http://www.frcv.org). The Rock Creek Valley is appx. 32 square miles and is bounded administratively by the Cedar River to the north, the Green River to the south, SR 169 to the west and the City of Seattle Cedar River Watershed to the east. The Friends have been involved with a number of acquisitions, restoration projects and data gathering.

The Plan is advisory with the intention of explaining the community's vision for the area. It focuses on three audiences: government, developers and community residents. The Plan is based on the Rock Creek Vision, which was previously adopted by the KC Council. It evaluates several resource categories including: urban/rural buffers, aquatic resources, wildlife, forest cover/forestry, viewsheds and recreation/trails. For each category, the plan makes recommendations for achieving the group's goals.

With regard to forestry, the Plan assumes that healthy, diverse working forests are a benefit to the Valley. Currently there are 6580 acres in the FPD in the Rock Creek Valley, including Ravensdale Ridge (2600 acres/39%) , WADNR lands (28%), and Fruitgrowers land (13%). Plum Creek owns about 1300 acres segmented into 20 acre parcels. 2700 acres of the forest cover is currently in public ownership. In the Rural Area Plum Creek owns about 700 acres and Palmer Coking Coal owns app. 300 acres.

Fred McCarty asked about the open space associated with the Polygon Maple Ridge Highlands development. At one point it was intended that this land be managed as a working forest. He feels that it is important that future projects like this incorporate working forests. Steve Ketz elaborated that it is possible to have a “right-to-forest” clause on the deed. However, people still complain when the chain saws start. Thom suggested that FRCV could help by educating neighbors when harvest activities are underway. Donna Brathovde commented that there is a diversity of opinions among County staff as to the best use of forestlands.

Doug Schindler asked who the stakeholders are. He feels it is important that there is a broad constituency of support. Donna pointed out that when the planning effort began, many of the constituent groups in the area were at the table. At this point, the group is seeking input from constituents on the draft plan.

The Friends are now in the process of overlaying the maps for each resource group to determine what parcels are the highest priority for acquisition, and where development is most appropriate.

FRCV is seeking input from the RFC. They are hoping that two or three members will volunteer to review the plan. Bill Kombol, Fred McCarty and Jean Bouffard, as the South County representatives, were volunteered. Benj will confirm with Bill and Jean that this is ok. The Friends are hoping to hold a community open house in October.

### **Next meeting**

Wednesday, October 8, 9:00 – 12:00, Preston Community Center.

Note - the meeting schedule for the next 6 months is as follows:

October 8

November 12

January 14

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